for the most part during the hours usually appropriated to recreation and sleep"—an example of industry and zeal for many a young doctor not overburdened with patients, if not to the traditional "busy practitioner."

To analyze the book would be largely to reproduce it, and we must refer those interested in the subject to the text itself. It consists essentially of the narration of the collected cases grouped together clinically, and followed by a running commentary. At the end are placed some "General Remarks" and a section on "Treatment." This, whether constitutional or local, medical or surgical, is naturally unsatisfactory, for the disease is but little amenable to treatment other than amputation—where this is practicable.

The book has one serious defect as it seems to us. With such a mass of material the subject might have been treated systematically, giving its pathology, etiology, description, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment under appropriate headings, using such typical cases as might be selected, and grouping the remaining cases, to which reference could be made, at the end. Students of the subject would thus have been able to obtain succinctly a more accurate idea of the disease. As the book is arranged it is essential to read it all, and moreover one will rise from its reading without such crystallized and sharply-cut notions as an author who has carefully studied the subject can readily formulate in well-chosen words. The author pleads in excuse that he has desired to present the subject clinically. But after all a book is intended to impart useful information, and we think the end would have been better attained had the book been recast in the form we have suggested.

W. W. K

ART. XXXII.—*The Antidotal Treatment of Disease.* By JOHN PARKIN, M.D., Corresponding Fellow of the Royal Academies of Medicine and Surgery of Madrid, of Barcelona, and of Cadiz; F.R.C.P. Edinburgh, etc. Part I. 8vo., pp. 307. London: Hardwicke and Boyne, 1878.

IF it be obvious that all criticism of books involves a twofold duty, towards authors and towards those who read, it will appear also that the principle of the greatest good to the greatest number makes paramount the reviewer's duty towards readers. Granting this, three kinds or classes of books may be named, which will include all: first, those which every one *must* read, if he would not fall entirely behind his times; secondly, those which any one *may* read, who has abundant leisure, and special interest in its subject; and thirdly, those which no one ought to waste time upon under any circumstances.

We believe it not unjust to Dr. Parkin's book to place it in the second of these categories. It gives evidence of considerable research in regard to the history of medical systems and theories; and a commendable acquaintance with recent pathological and therapeutical investigations. The characteristic matter of the book, however, consists in three ideas or opinions of the author, with a number of clinical facts interpreted by him as supporting them. The first of these opinions is, that "the majority of fevers—all specific or essential fevers—are the product of one particular agent, viz., *malaria.*" In this identity of causation Dr. Parkin includes intermittent and remittent fever, yellow fever, typhus, (probably) typhoid, puerperal fever, smallpox, scarlet fever, and measles; repudiating the "theory of contagion" altogether (p. 298).

His second peculiarity lies in the pathological domain. He holds that the *symptoms* of all fevers are due to the presence of the malarial poison in the *capillaries*, systemic and pulmonary; its action being "due, solely and entirely, to the toxic effect of the morbid matter on the nervous system" (p. 103).

Lastly, that which justifies the title of the book, "The Antidotal Treatment of Fever," is the assertion, that *carbonic acid*, given especially during the cold stage, is *the antidote* for all forms of fever. The manner in which Dr. Parkin adduces facts to support this view, not only from his own experimental medication in practice, but from that of others, and from familiar medical records, is that of an earnest as well as ingenious advocate. Effervescing draughts, commonly regarded as agreeable palliative, minor remedies, are by our author promoted to the rank of therapeutic agents in chief; heroic, though so gentle; "suaviter in modo, fortiter in re." All other agencies in therapeutics are, with him, to be extinguished by this gas. Champagne must now be understood to do good in yellow fever and typhus, not through its alcoholic constituent, but by its effervescence. Quinia Dr. Parkin believes to be too uncertain, and often injurious, to be given longer in intermittent; carbonic acid must take its place.

These are assertions not only of opinion, but also concerning clinical facts. Only by clinical experience, carefully and largely tested, can they be proved or disproved. If we share with many, probably most of our readers, very strong doubts as to the exactness of Dr. Parkin's interpretations, and the soundness of his practical conclusions, his appeal has been made to experience; and that appeal must, of course, be sustained. H. H.

ART. XXXIII.—*Physics of the Infectious Diseases. Comprehending a Discussion of Certain Physical Phenomena in Connection with the Acute Infectious Diseases.* By C. A. LOGAN, A.M., M.D. 12mo. pp. 212. Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co., 1878.

A LONG residence on the western coast of South America has led Dr. Logan to notice certain remarkable facts as to the non-existence of some infectious diseases, and the modification of others, in large portions of that volcanic belt of land.

The old theory, that earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are mere mechanical activities of the boiling and bubbling molten matter under the earth's crust, is entirely discarded by Dr. Logan. Electric disturbance, or rather perhaps the restoring of electric equilibrium, is believed to be the cause of the phenomena in question. Regular thunder-storms are rare in the earthquake region. Preceding the convulsions, displays of electric lights in the heavens are quite common. The magnetic needle is affected, and the hair of animals is charged with electricity. Peculiar oppression, or other strange sensations of the nervous system, are noticed. A peculiar state of the atmosphere is often remarked. Meteorites are frequently unusually abundant. The production of rain and of ozone also point to electric action as the essence of the phenomena.

Having briefly noted some of the peculiarities of the region, as stated and interpreted by our writer, we will now pass to the special characteristics of disease as there existent.

Whatever may be thought of Dr. Logan's reasoning, his statements as to the absence or modification of epidemic diseases on the west coast of South America are sufficiently startling to secure attention and elicit thought. The value of facts is not destroyed by any lack of skill in their interpretation.

Throughout the rainless regions, and those where the waterfall is purely sea-